

Abstract

The invention provides an apparatus and a method for directing gas towards a specimen, said apparatus includes: (i) means for directing a beam of charged particles towards the specimen; and (ii) a gas conduit providing gas to an area of incidence of said beam of charged particles onto said specimen. The gas conduit includes an intermediate portion having a first end for receiving the inert gas and a substantially sealed second end. The intermediate portion has a first and second apertures that are positioned such as to define a space through which the beam of charged particles can propagate. The intermediate portion is shaped such as to allow a first portion of the inert gas to exit the second aperture and to allow a second portion of the gas to propagate towards the second end and to be returned through the second aperture.